RGAPA FBI

January 11, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Howard P. Willens

FROM: Charles N. Shaffer

SUBJECT: Information Failure

Today, I was at the Justice Department and Assistant Attorney General Miller furnished me with the two attached letterhead memoranda dated December 19 and December 30, 1963, which were received fromthe Bureau in due course and which obviously are pertinent to the work of this Commission.

At the moment we are in no position to finally evaluate the content of either. I am morally certain that neither of the above have been transmitted to Mr. Rankin as they properly should have been. Accordingly, I am disturbed that the Bureau is conducting investigation and not furnishing uswith the results.

Knowing the Bureau as we do, I suggest the matter be informally discussed with their representative in contact with the Commission. In this way, the matter can be corrected with the least amount of friction.

Noted and talked with Mr. Miller about this on 1-14-64.
J.L.R.

The FBI held out on the Commission from the very first. It got caught early, got away with it, never stopped doing what it damned well pleased and not doing what it wanted not to, the FBI and Warren Commission way of "investigating" the assassination of an American President. The two reports referred to in this suppressed staff memo no longer exist, the Archivist of the United States assures me. Even when the FBI was caught red-handed, Commission interest was not in forcing them to work and cooperate properly. It was to have "the least amount of friction". Everyone was in terror of Hoover. It is in this connection the author of the report, a former assistant United States attorney and a trial lawyer in the Justice Department, uses the revealing delicacy, "Knowing the FBI as we do". The Commission was barely more than a month old when he felt impelled to use this euphemism - and he an employee of the Department of Justice! The wonder is that this report is legible. That written four days later by the Commission's liaison, Howard P. Willens, is not. The note is by J. Lee Rankin, Commission chief counsel. No one who had ever worked with the FBI should ever have doubted that Hoover would run the show, do things his way, manipulate the Commission as best he could, and be immune. Most of the Commission staff and all the members should have known this and did, as their top-secret deliberations, from which even the staff was excluded, show beyond question. Therefore, the following record of it is so indistinct it is illegible.